

## Message Text

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ACTION INR-10

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H-01 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 7406

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: XA, CU, MPOL  
SUBJECT: CUBA'S ROLE IN AFRICA

REF: (A) USINFO 091630 (B) LAGOS 6717

1. IN A MEETING N JUNE 8 REQUESTED BY EMBOFF TO DISCUSS  
DAILY TIMES EDITORIAL (CHASING SHADOWS IN AFRICA" (REF A),  
DR. PATRICK DELE COLE, EXECUTIVE EDITOR OF THE TIMES  
DISCOURSED AT LENGTH ON CUBA'S ROLE IN AFRICA. WITH REGARD  
TO SHABA, HE SAID THAT IF THE WESTERN COUNTRIES COULD  
INVITE THEMSELVES INTO AFRICA THEN CERTAINLY AFRICANS  
COULD INVITE WHOMEVER THEY CHOOSE, INCLUDING CUBANS,  
SOVIETS AND CHINESE. HE THOUGHT, HOWEVER, THAT IT WAS  
PRESUMPTIOUS OF WESTERN POWERS TO ASSUME A SECURITY ROLE  
FOR AFRICA AS IF WE WERE STILL LIVING IN THE DAYS OF  
BISMARCK, COLE NOTED THAT WHAT HE HAD NOT SAID BUT WHAT  
HE HAD MEANT TO CONVEY WAS THAT WESTERN COUNTRIES WOULD  
NOT HAVE PARACHUTED SOLDIERS TO SAVE THEIR NATIONALS  
INTO A SOVEREIGN WHITE COUNTRY, SUCH AS A EUROPEAN NATION,  
THE SOVIET UNION OR ISRAEL. THEY INVADE THE SOVEREIGN  
BLACK NATIONS OF AFRICA WITH IMPUNITY BECAUSE OF THEIR  
MILITARY STRENGTH. HE DESCRIBED THE SHABA CRISIS  
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RESPONSE AS ANOTHER CHAPTER IN THE BLACK-WHITE  
CONFRONTATION.

2. COLW BELIEVES THE SUREST WAY TO DECREASE THE CUBAN  
PRESENCE IN ANGOLA IS TO PROVIDE NETO WITH ASSURANCES OF  
SECURITY FROM DISSIDENTS OPERATING FROM BORDER COUNTRIES.  
HE THINKS NETO COULD BE PERSUADED TO TRADE SECURITY

FROM UNITA OPERATING FROM ZAIRIAN BASES FOR SECURITY FROM FNLC OPER FROM ANGOLA BASES. COLE MENTIONED THAT GARBA HAD SECRETLY OBTAINED COMMITMENTS FROM NETO FOLLOWING THE LAST SHABA INVASION BUT THAT NETO PERMITTED THE RECENT INVASION AS A WARNING TO MOBUTU ABOUT CONTINUING TO SUPPORT UNITA.

3. WHEN ASKED WHETHER NIGERIA WOULD ACCEPT CUBAN TROOPS SUPPORTING THE P.F., COLE SAID THAT IN THE BEGINNING CUBA WAS NOT CONSIDERED AS PART OF THE SCENARIO. BUT THE US/UK INABILITY TO REMOVE IAN SMITH AND PUT THE ECONOMIC CLAMP ON SOUTH AFRICA MAY LEAVE AFRICA NO OTHER CHOICE. HE FEELS THAT GIVEN NO CHANGE IN ZIMBABWE, CUBAN TROOPS WOULD BE A REALITY IN SIX MONTHS. COLE INSISTED THAT SOUTH AFRICA RACISM WAS THE DEEPEST CANCER IN AFRICA AND SHOULD BE THE OBJECT OF US AND WESTERN CONCERN, FROM A MORAL AS WELL AS POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE, RATHER THAN SOVIET OR CUBAN PRESENCE IN AFRICA. THE US HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO RESTRAIN ISRAEL FROM ATTACKING THE ARABS ON A PRETENSE OF THREATENED BORDERS; LIKEWISE, IT WILL NOT CONTAIN SOUTH AFRICA. BLACKS IN ZIMBABWE WILL ACCEPT THE OPPORTUNITY TO DIE REVENGING YEARS OF REPRESSION AND RACISM WITH NO THOUGHT TO INTERNATIONAL CONSEQUENCES BECAUSE IT IS THEIR ONLY ALTERNATIVE. CONSEQUENTLY, WHETHER IT COME IN SIX MONTHS OR TEN YEARS IT MUST COME BECAUSE SOUTH AFRICA WILL NOT CHANGE. CONFIDENTIAL

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"WE CONCENTRATE ON ZIMBABWE AND NAMIBIA BECAUSE WE MUST HAVE ADJACENT TERRITORY FROM WHICH TO LAUNCH AN OPPOSING FORCE."

4. COLE EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT CUBAN PRESENCE MAY HAVE THE BENEFICIAL EFFECT OF MAKING THE WEST REACT TO THE SOUTH AFRICA/RACISM PROBLEM BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE. HE FEARS THAT POLITICAL FORCES WITHIN THE US WILL NOT ALLOW PRESIDENT CARTER TO MAINTAIN HIS CURRENT POLICY, AND THAT THE UK WILL ABANDON THE ANGLO-AMERICAN INITIATIVE IN ZIMBABWE, LEAVING THE US WITH INTERNAL POLITICAL DIVISION AND SUBSEQUENTLY POWERLESS TO ACT.

5. COMMENT: COLE IS A TRUSTED CONFIDENTANT IN NIGERIA'S TOP LEADERS AND WAS NAMED TO HIS PRESENT POST BY HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO. REPORTEDLY, HE IS CONSULTED BY MEMBERS OF THE SMC ON BOTH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MATTERS. COLE'S OBSERVATIONS ARE THOSE THAT WE ARE HEARING ON ALL SIDES THESE DAYS. HIS JUDGMENT THAT NETO COULD BE PERSUADED TO ENTER INTO SOME AGREEMENT WITH ZAIRE AND STATEMENT THAT GARBA HAD PREVIOUSLY RECEIVED A COMMITMENT FROM NETO MAY BE THE SPRINGBOARD FROM WHICH

THE FMG IS LAUNCHING ITS CURRENT INITIATIVE TO MEDIATE  
THE SHABA CRISIS. END COMMENT.  
WYMAN

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